

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3922

UNCLAS BRUSSELS 4402

FOR A/O

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: OVIP (FORD, GERALD)

SUBJECT: INFORMATION FOR PRESS BOOKS

REF: STATE 112993

1. FINAL PROGRAM NOT SETTLED FOR PRESIDENT AND MRS. FORD. FOLLOWING ARE DESCRIPTIONS OF SITES THEY ARE LIKELY TO SEE OR VISIT;

2. PARC DE BRUXELLES -- SMALL PARK IN HEART OF CITY ACROSS RUE DUCALE FROM AMBASSADOR'S RESIDENCE AND BETWEEN ROYAL PALACE AND PARLIAMENT. DESIGNED BY AUSTRIAL ARCHITECT ZINNER (FOR WHOM RUE ZENNER, ADDRESS OF RESIDENCE, IS NAMED) AND FRENCH ARCHITECT GUIMARD IN 1776. LOCATED ON SITE OF ANCIENT HUNTING PRESERVE OF THE DUKES OF BRABANT, THE PARK WAS SCENE OF AN IMPORTANT BATTLE DURING BELGIAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE WITH DUTCH IN 1830.

3. PALAIS DES BEAUX ARTS -- SITE OF THE QUEEN ELISABETH INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CONTEST (SEE BELOW) WAS BUILT IN 1928 BY THE FAMOUS BELGIAN "ART NOUVEAU" ARCHITECT BARON HORTA. IT IS THE FORUM FOR MANY OF BRUSSELS' ARTISTIC ACTIVITIES AND PROBABLY IS THE OLDEST CULTURAL CENTER, IN THE MODERN SENSE, ANYWHERE IN THE WORLD.

4. THE QUEEN ELISABETH INTERNATIONAL MUSIC CONTEST, ONE OF THE WORLD'S MOST PRESTIGIOUS MUSICAL COMPETITIONS, IS NAMED

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FOR ITS FOUNDER, WIFE OF THE LATE KING ALBERT AND GRAND MOTHER

OF KING BAUDION. THIS YEARS PIANO COMPETITION WILL BE HELD MAY 26-31 AT THE PALAIS DES BEAUX ARTS. NEXT YEAR'S VIOLIN COMPETITION WILL BE DEDICATED TO THE 100 BIRTH ANNIVERSARY OF QUEEN ELISABETH, WHO DIED IN 1965.

5. ROYAL PALACE -- OFFICIAL RESIDENCE FOR STATE FUNCTIONS, THOUGH THE KING AND QUEEN DO NOT LIVE HERE. IF WAS BUILT DURING THE 18TH CENTURY IN A CENTRAL SECTION ADDED IN 1827. IT WAS ENLARGED AND COMPLETEDLY TRANSFORMED FROM 1904 TO 1912. HOUSES OFFICES OF THE COURT AND IS USED FIR CEREMONIAL OCCASIONS.

6. KING'S PALACE AT LAEKEN -- RESIDENCE OF THE ROYAL FAMILY. THE PARK WAS LAID OUT IN 1880 BY LEOPOLD II AROUND THE CASTLE BUILT BY THE AUSTRIAN GOVERNOR OF THE LOW COUNTRIES. NAPOLEON STAYED THERE SEVERAL TIMES AND IT WAS HERE THAT HE SIGNED IN 1812 THE DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST RUSSIA. IN 1890 THE ORIGINAL CASTLE WAS DESTROYED BY FIRE AND RESTORED.

7. NATO HEADQUARTERS -- ESTABLISHED OCT 16, 1967 FOLLOWING DECISION TO MOVE FROM PARIS. GROUP OF INTERCONNECTED THREE STORY BUILDINGS ON 50 ACRE SITE BETWEEN BRUSSELS AND INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT AT ZAVENTEM. COMPLEX HOLDS 1,500 OFFICES, CONFERENCE ROOMS AND OTHER FACILITIES FOR 15 NATIONAL DELEGATIONS AND INTERNATIONAL STAFF. ABOUT 2,400 PERSONS WORK IN THE COMPLEX. FIRESTONE

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